

Reentry Employment Opportunities

The Reentry Employment Opportunities (REO) program's mission is to inform the public workforce system on how best to serve justice-involved youth, young adults and adults who are currently or formerly incarcerated. Grants are awarded through Funding Opportunity Announcements (FOAs). Approximately 100 REO grantees have operated each year since 2015 serving over 9,000 people combined annually.

REO Appropriation by Program Year

PY2023	\$115,000,000
PY 2022	\$102,079,000
PY 2021	\$100,079,000
PY 2020	\$98,079,000

REO is authorized under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) and tests the effectiveness of service delivery models found in community, faith-based organizations, and government systems for their adaptability in assisting the reentry population enter the workforce. REO projects also promote collaboration and coordination between community-based organizations, foundations, state and local justice agencies, community colleges, and the workforce system. Annually, REO allots approximately \$30 million to national and regional intermediaries for activities to improve employment outcomes for justice-involved youth and young adults and individuals who left school prior to graduating with priority for projects in communities facing high levels of crime and poverty. To reduce violence and empower America's younger generation REO has developed a program that contributes to community violence intervention among youth and young adults and aligns with a comprehensive federal strategy to combat gun violence and other violent crimes. Through its partnership with the Department of Justice's Bureau of Prisons (BOP), REO delivers workforce development services to incarcerated individuals in the Federal prison system through PROWD – Partnership for Reentry Opportunities in Workforce Development.

Core Services Provided for Young Adults: Youth and young adult projects focus on post-release services that include: *apprenticeships; case management; credit retrieval; diversion from adjudication; legal services; follow-up; high school diploma equivalency preparation; job placement; mentoring; occupational skills training; staff and leadership development activities; restorative justice opportunities; tutoring; work experience (paid and unpaid); community violence intervention among youth and young adults; conflict resolution and other supportive services.*

Core Services Provided for Adults: Adult projects focus on pre- and post-release services that include: *apprenticeships; case management; career exploration through work experience and internships; employer connections; high school diploma equivalency preparation; job placement; legal assistance; mentoring; needs assessments; occupational training in in-demand industries; and pre-employment skill-building services.*

Eligibility/Target Population: Participants in youth programs range in age from 15 to 18, and in young adult programs they range in age from 18 to 24 years old. The participants are youth and young adults at risk of community violence or have been involved with the juvenile or adult criminal justice system. Additionally, up to ten percent of young adults who left high school without graduating, and are not involved in the criminal



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justice system may be eligible to participate. Adult reentry programs focus on providing services to individuals 18 years old and older who were convicted and imprisoned as an adult. Adults are incarcerated at the time of enrollment.

ETA and the Chief Evaluation Office (CEO) conducts evaluations on the impact and implementation of REO programs. REO is discretionary program and may change the program design of its grants every two to three years. The use of evidence and evaluation is needed for continuous learning and program improvement in the reentry field. Evaluation results have the opportunity to inform future workforce development policy.

These evaluations can be found at:

- [Reentry Projects Grant Evaluation](#)
- [Workforce Supports Reentry Population During COVID-19](#)
- [LEAP Issue Brief Compendium](#)

CURRENT INITIATIVES:

- [Partners for Reentry Opportunities in Workforce Development](#) (PROWD)
- [Growth Opportunities](#) (GO)
- [Pathway Home](#) (PH)
- [Young Adult Reentry Partnership](#) (YARP)
- [Reentry Projects](#) (RP)

PREVIOUS INITIATIVES:

- Face Forward
- Job ChalleNGe
- Linking to Employment Activities Pre-Release
- Pathways to Justice Careers
- Reentry Demonstration Project
- Training 2 Work Grants

FEDERAL BONDING PROGRAM

Through the Federal Bonding Program (FBP), the Department provides fidelity bonds to employers to help remove the risks of hiring individuals whose backgrounds pose significant barriers to securing or retaining employment. The FBP was developed in 1966 by DOL to help people in reentry gain access to private sector jobs. Fidelity bonding is insurance that indemnifies employers for loss of money or property sustained through the dishonest acts of their employees (i.e., theft, forgery, larceny, and embezzlement) with no deductible amount to become the employer's liability (100% coverage). The FBP has a 99% success rate, with only 1% of claims processed. In 2019, DOL greatly expanded the program by providing grant funds to 23 states and one U.S. territory. In 2020, DOL awarded an additional \$725 thousand to grant funds to in eight states to expand their use of fidelity bonds to cover employers hiring persons with criminal records, including recovering from opioid and other addictions. The bonds cover the first six months of employment at no cost to the job applicant or the employer. For more information, please visit www.bonds4jobs.com.

